



**VERMONT
YOUTH
CONSERVATION
CORPS**

**2017 ANNUAL REPORT
OUR INVESTMENT IN VERMONT**



@THEVYCC / VYCC.ORG

Mission & Values

Vermont Youth Conservation Corps (VYCC) is a conservation organization that teaches young people personal responsibility through meaningful work that connects us to the land, community, and each other. Each year we:

- Welcome 300 new and returning Corps Members to our growing family of 6,500+ alumni;
- Pay 15-24 year olds to complete conservation and agricultural projects throughout Vermont;
- Teach essential workforce readiness skills; and
- Instill the values of personal responsibility, service, leadership, appreciation for diverse backgrounds, hard work, and a reverence for the natural world.



*Front cover photo: Natasha Steinmann, VYCC Field Staff and Maddie Shropshire, Conservation Crew AmeriCorps Member improving infrastructure at Maidstone State Park
Photo: 2017 Crew Leaders, pre-season, pre-dirt, post-training.*

Corps Member Voices

"You start by serving your community and end with giving so much more to yourself through the work and the friends and the confidence you gain."

– Maddie Shropshire (Quechee, VT),

2017 AmeriCorps Member, Conservation Spike Crew
& new Crew Leader in 2018



Maddie (left) and Victoria Best, rebuilding a public pavillion at a Vermont State Parks' worksite



Ben, showing off a County Fair worthy sunflower on the Farm at YVCC

As we made the rounds [of Health Care Share deliveries],
I was filled with a sense of satisfaction.

It's one thing to grow vegetables and care for the animals, but it's another to see where they go and imagine the bellies they feed. It feels good to know that our food makes it into your houses every week."

– Ben Lloyd, (Amesbury, MA),

2017 Food and Farm Leadership Development Crew
AmeriCorps Member

A Word From Our Leadership

Dear Friends,

Thank you reading this report on VYCC's impact here in Vermont. In the pages that follow, we share stories that convey the vitality of our work, the communities we touch, and the lives we change. VYCC exemplifies the best of the Youth Corps spirit by:

- investing in young Vermonters and fostering deep appreciation for personal responsibility and service;
- protecting and restoring public and working lands that expand beyond trails and into parks, waterways, farms, community gardens and other public spaces that we all love and use; and
- strengthening our economy through 300 paying positions for talented young people who care deeply about their communities...and helping them to put down roots here in the Green Mountain State!

Service, community, and enduring relationships are central to our mission and thus, our success. Together, with your support, we will continue to make VYCC inclusive and accessible to all, innovative and adaptive in programming, and a touchstone experience for today's youth and tomorrow's leaders.

We invite you to visit a VYCC crew this year. Witnessing and hearing Corps Members' efforts will buoy your spirits and give you hope for our future. A visit with a crew will be a highlight of your season—we guarantee it. Please call us to arrange one, (802) 434-3969 ext. 110. Thank you, and let's make the VYCC experience possible for all Vermont youth.



In gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jim Feinson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jim Feinson
Board Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Breck Knauft". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Breck Knauft
Executive Director



Statewide Impact: By The Numbers

PROGRAMS

IN COUNTIES

14

IN PARTNERSHIPS WITH

100

ORGANIZATIONS,
BUSINESSES, CITIES & TOWNS

TRAINING & EMPLOYING

300

YOUNG PEOPLE

WITH SUPPORT FROM

900+

INDIVIDUALS,
FOUNDATIONS
& CORPORATIONS

9.5

MILES OF TRAILS
MAINTAINED & BUILT

613

CHICKENS RAISED & DISTRIBUTED
TO VERMONTERS IN NEED

10,860

TREES & PLANTS PLANTED

84,187

POUNDS OF FOOD GROWN & DISTRIBUTED TO
VERMONTERS IN NEED

*A VYCC Corps Member taking in the mist
of Owls Head Town Forest in Dorset.*

Conservation Program Impact

2017 Conservation
Crew locations



Our **Conservation Program** is built upon nearly 35 years of a deep connection to Vermont's public lands. Inspired by the historic Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), we partner with young people who gain:

- **Hands on skills in:** carpentry, trail building, waterway restoration and more.
- **Unique crew life experience on:** a traditional Spike Crew, working on site and camping or on a 2017 Community Crew, working on site, while living at home in their own communities of Brattleboro, Burlington, S. Burlington, Williston, St. Albans, Woodstock, and Barre.
- **A community of peers:** like our American Sign Language (ASL) (for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Corps Members), Female Leadership Development, and longer term AmeriCorps Member crews.

Photo: 2017 Conservation Crew Leaders on an ADA-accessible trail bridge they built on Camel's Hump

Food and Farm Program Impact



Our **Food and Farm Program** centers around our **Health Care Share Program**. VYCC crews grow and distribute organic produce to Vermonters in need through their health providers. We are proud of our strong partnership with the Corporation for National and Community Service, SerVermont, and Vermont medical centers. Guided by AmeriCorps Team and Project Leaders, Corps Members work and serve throughout the year by:

- **Teaching and learning agriculture** skills on our beautiful Richmond campus and on partner farms in Orleans and Washington counties;
- **Practicing and improving personal nutrition and finance;**
- **Exploring Vermont food systems** through Venture Semester, a residential GAP year program; and
- **Taking personal responsibility** for their actions.

Photo: 2017 Richmond Farm Community Crew modeling the flower harvest

Farm Crew Highlight: Newport Community Crew

9,504

That's how many pounds
of food the
Newport Farm
Community Crew grew!

“I've always been very passionate about the connection between food and community, as well as food and education, so the fact that we are also providing them with education is super important to me.”

– Molly Gellar (Wolcott, VT), 2017 Newport Crew Leader and SerVermont AmeriCorps Member

Molly planting squash starts on the Bluffside Farm in Newport

In 2017, Food and Farm crews worked and learned on 14 farms in Vermont, including our ten-acre home farm in Richmond. At VYCC's northern most project location, a crew of local Newport youth worked on the Bluffside Farm, a Vermont Land Trust owned property. They grew produce that helped to feed patient families through our Health Care Share (HCS) partnership with North Country Hospital.

In total, this crew of nine grew produce for 66 Vermont families in need.



Photo: 2017 Newport Community
Crew, growing food and friendships



"Hosting the Health Care Share garden and crew at Bluffside Farm has been a great development that is right in line with community priorities for the property in terms of agriculture, health and education.

We are thrilled to be partnering with VYCC,
North Country Hospital, and area youth to make this happen."

–Tracy Zschau, Conservation Director, Vermont Land Trust

Conservation Crew Highlight: AmeriCorps Crew #4



Erika prepping a felled tree for trail work on the AT

2,354

That's how many hours this Conservation Crew put in the field.

"My VYCC experience has led me to pursue further education in the trades because of the sense of pride I got from working with my hands. Further, I have a new respect and understanding of the role nature plays in the lives of humans."

—Erika Akerson (Worcester, MA),
2017 AmeriCorps Member, Conservation Spike Crew

In 2017, Conservation crews were in every corner of the state, completing projects in many communities large, small, near, and far. A small sampling of projects included:

- eight weeks of **deep forest trail work** on the Long Trail (LT) and Appalachian Trail (AT) in southern Vermont;
- building a **new mountain bike trail** in Dorset and **planting dozens of trees** in Addison County; and
- **repairing trails and roads from erosion** and phosphorus run-off in Bolton and Essex.

Corps Members are proud preserve the LT and AT legacies and making lasting impact in communities connected by this historic network!

2017 AC #4
locations



"[The crew] did a great job and accomplished high-quality work beyond my expectations. As always, I am proud to be partnered with such an exceptional organization

that continues to accomplish great work with a lot of positive energy.

I see a lot of future leaders coming out of the VYCC!"

—Seth Coffey, Recreation Technician, Green Mountain National Forest

Photo: AC #4 building a stone staircase for generations to come

Community Crew Highlight: Burlington



Eva using a rockbar to move a 500 pound rock into place

“Since joining the VYCC, I have gained so many leadership skills and so much knowledge about the world around me. My greatest accomplishment was building culverts and doing the decking [of a bridge] by myself! Now, when I go hiking, I pay attention to water drainage and how water comes off the trail.”

—Eva Kamman (Vergennes, VT), 2017 Corps Member, Conservation Burlington Community Crew

VYCC and Burlington’s Parks, Recreation and Waterfront Department launched a three-year partnership to put local youth to work on the City’s beautiful public lands. A crew of eight Burlington area youth and two leaders:

- **improved a century old path** to Ethan Allen Tower;
- constructed a timber crib wall, **reducing erosion and improving safety** in Smalley Park; and
- and **built bridges and drainage structures** in Arms Park.

Visitors to these parks now see how strong community partnerships really do make a difference!

3,400

That's how many feet of trail
this crew resurfaced!

2017 Burlington Community Crew on top of Ethan Allen Tower!

“Our partnership with VYCC is helping us achieve our conservation goals.

Not only are we building high-quality trail projects, but we are also increasing our capacity to engage youth of Burlington in a deep and meaningful way.

I'm very excited about the short and long-term benefits of our partnership.”

-Dan Cahill, Land Steward, Burlington Parks, Recreation and Waterfront

An Award Winning Year!

VYCC and Partners Receive U.S. Forest Service Award for Creating A Culture of Inclusion



*2017 ASL Crew Leader Kat O'Leary
translating instructions from a project partner*

“It is fulfilling to know that we have the ingenuity, persistence, and can-do relationships that have resulted in introducing youth from a variety of backgrounds to their public lands, careers in natural resource management, and environmental stewardship ethics. This recognition for the VYCC American Sign Language (ASL) Spike Crew means so much!”

-Holly Knox, Recreation Program Manager for the Green Mountain National Forest

Health Care Share Recognized As Project of the Year



*Chris Spencer (left) and Emily Zeimet (right),
2017 Leadership Development AmeriCorps Members
washing lettuce on the Farm at VYCC*

“The Health Care Share program represents everything we look for in a successful Corps project. This program provides a tangible benefit to the community and creates opportunities for young adults to learn and develop valuable skills. While several of our more than 130 member Corps across the country operate outstanding farm programs, this is one of the largest and is the only program that incorporates strong partnerships with the health care community. We applaud VYCC for their innovation and leadership in this field.”

-Mary Ellen Sprenkel, President & CEO of The Corps Network

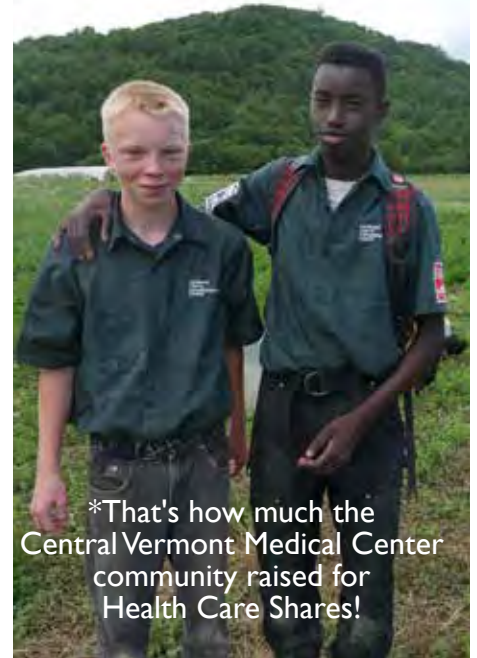
OUR PROJECT PARTNERS

VYCC partners with national, regional, Vermont organizations, businesses, private land owners, and Vermont cities and towns through our crew work. These connections include paid contractual work, in-kind efforts, projects for crews, crew camping sites, project management support, and more.

Alchemy Gardens (Shrewsbury)
Appalachian Trail Conservancy (Harpers Ferry, WV)
Army Corps of Engineers (Wilmington & Wake Forest, NC)
Audubon Vermont (Huntington)
Barre Cow Pasture (Barre)
Blue Ridge Parkway (Asheville, NC)
Boy Scout Troops of Milton and Williston
Breezy Meadows Farm (Belvidere)
Burk County (Hickory, Lenoir, & Morganton, NC)
Caravan Gardens (Shrewsbury)
Catamount Trail Association (Burlington)
Central Vermont Medical Center*
Champlain Valley Farmer Coalition (Middlebury)
Champlain Valley Union High School (Hinesburg)
Children's Miracle Network (Salt Lake City, UT)
City Market Co-op (Burlington)
City of Barre
City of Burlington
City of South Burlington
City of St. Albans
Coastal Land Trust (Wilmington, NC)
Conservation Trust for North Carolina (Raleigh, NC)

Department of Environmental Conservation (Montpelier)
EnSave, Inc. (Richmond)
Finger Lakes National Forest (Burdett, NY)
Friends of Haystack Mountain (Pawlet)
Green Mountain Club (Waterbury Center)
Green Mountain National Forest (Rutland)
High Mowing Seeds (Wolcott)
Hunger Free Vermont (S. Burlington)
Hunger Mountain Co-op (Montpelier)
Jericho Settlers Farm (Jericho)
Keurig Green Mountain (Waterbury)
Lake Iroquois Association (Williston)
Lintlilac Foundation (Shelburne)
Maple Wind Farm (Huntington)
Marsh Billings Rockefeller National Historical Park (Woodstock)
Mecklenburg County (North Carolina)
Montpelier High School (Montpelier)
Mount Mansfield Union High School (Jericho)
Mountain Health Center (Bristol)
National Life Group (Montpelier)
National Park Service Northeast Region (Philadelphia, PA)

\$40,000



*That's how much the Central Vermont Medical Center community raised for Health Care Shares!

NOFA-VT (Richmond)
 North Country Primary Care Barton-Orleans (Barton)
 North Country Hospital (Newport)
 Our Community Cares Camp (Richmond)
 Public Lands Corps (Washington, D.C.)
 Retreat Farm (Brattleboro)
 Richmond Family Medicine (Richmond)
 Rutland Regional Medical Center (Rutland)
 Salvation Farms (Morristown)
 SerVermont (Waterbury)
 Smokey House Center (Danby)
 Southwestern Vermont Medical Center (Bennington)
 Saint-Gaudens National Historic Site (Cornish, NH)
 Tar River Land Conservancy (Louisburg, NC)
 The Nature Conservancy (Montpelier)
 Town of Dorset
 Town of Northfield
 Town of Williston
 University of Vermont Medical Center
 Upper Kingdom Food Access
 Uwharrie National Forest (Troy, NC)
 Vermont Department for
 the Blind and Visually Impaired (S. Burlington)
 Vermont Department of Forests,
 Parks and Recreation (Montpelier)
 Vermont Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (Waterbury)

Vermont Foodbank (Barre)
 Vermont Gleaning Collective (Morristown)
 Vermont Land Trust (Newport)
 Vermont Technical College (Williston & Randolph Center)
 Vermont Vegetable and Berry Growers Association (Burlington)
 Walmart Foundation (Bentonville, AR)
 Waterhouses Campground and Marina (Salisbury)
 Winooski Valley Park District (Burlington)

We have long-standing
 partnerships with:



We are proud members of:



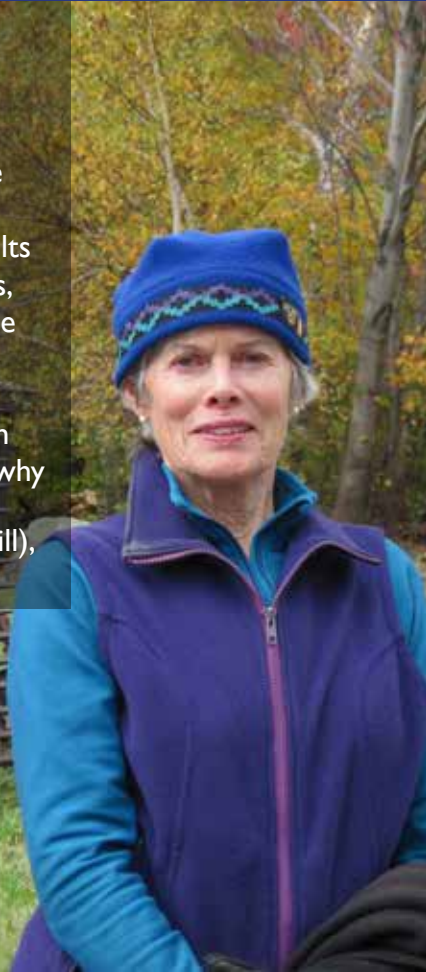
Since 2013, VYCC has had a special partnership with the Conservation Trust of North Carolina to manage the North Carolina Youth Conservation Corps.

In 2017, we enrolled 44 North Carolina young people whom worked on 11 sites.

Estate Planning to VYCC

Making a legacy gift to VYCC is something I feel strongly about. It is my way of supporting VYCC's continued ability to benefit Vermont's youth. Its programs give young people the confidence and leadership skills they need to become responsible adults while, as hard-working crew members, they learn about conserving our fragile natural environment. Having been involved with and inspired by VYCC for many years, I know that it is worth investing in for the long term. That's why I have included it in my estate plans."
-Caroline Wadhams Bennett (Underhill), VYCC Sustaining Donor

**Thank you for
making a
gift today!
VYCC.org/Support**



Caroline Wadhams Bennett Stewardship

A gift this year supports today's youth. We invite you to also support tomorrow's youth by joining this special group.

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**Notes deceased donors.*

Explore the option of making a Legacy Gift by reaching out to our Director of Development Dan.Bailey@VYCC.org, 802-434-3969 ext. 112.

Who Gives to VYCC?

Our success and financial strength are made possible by these generous individuals and businesses.

Leadership Giving at \$25,000 Or More

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- Board members are **bolded**.
- Sustaining donors are *italicized*.
- 20-year donors are in green.
- 10-year donors are in blue.



2017 Conservation Crew AC #3
on new access stairs.

Who Gives to VYCC?

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Cianna Bailey,
2017 Farm Crew Member turning
over a bed for fall planting

\$250-\$499

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2017 Conservation Crew AC #1
chasing waterfalls

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Join our growing
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monthly!

VYCC.org/Support

*Audrey Hemmer (foreground),
2017 Farm Crew Member tending
spinach on the Farm at VYCC*



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Shania Elias,
2017 Farm Crew Member
with the harvest bounty

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\$1-\$49

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Dustin Bowman
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Jack Learmonth
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*2017 Conservation Crew AC #5
pulling as a team*

Gifts in Tribute

A meaningful way to honor, celebrate, or remember. A personal acknowledgment is sent to the individual or family you specify. Gift amounts remain confidential. Contributions were made in honor or memory of the individuals listed in bold by donors listed below them in italics.

In Honor of RJ Thompson

*Jeff Ares
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2017 ConservationWoodstock Community Crew surveying a new trail site.



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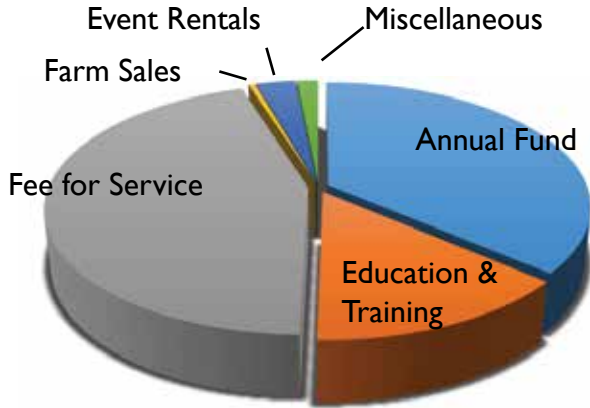
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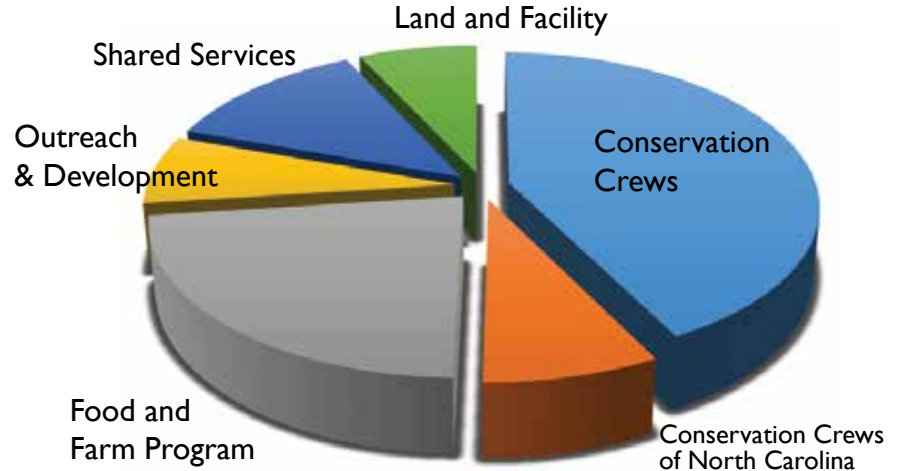
Financials

Summary of Revenues*



Annual Fund	\$1,105,985
Education and Training	\$426,707
Fee for Service	\$1,362,245
Farm Sales	\$14,708
Event Rentals	\$88,653
Miscellaneous	\$46,684
Total Revenues	\$3,044,982

Summary of Expenses*



Conservation Crews, Vermont	\$1,207,886
Conservation Crews, North Carolina	\$225,142
Food and Farm Program	\$647,857
Outreach and Development	\$205,924
Shared Services	\$357,122
Land and Facility	\$205,070
Total Expenses	\$2,849,001

*Unaudited figures as of 5/1/18

Leadership

VYCC Staff *(As of 12/31/17)*

Dan Bailey, Development Director (South Burlington)
Ruby Bertola, Farm and Food AmeriCorps VISTA (Huntington)
Laura DeMaria, Office and Events Coordinator (Underhill)
Paul Feenan, Food and Farm Program Director (Richmond)
Rachel Headings, Development AmeriCorps VISTA (Burlington)
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Caelan Keenan, Food and Farm Program Manager (Richmond)
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2017 Seasonal Crew Leaders, cheery in "sunshine or rain..."

Back page photo: Spring Leadership Development Crew transplanting sunflowers on the Farm at VYCC



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